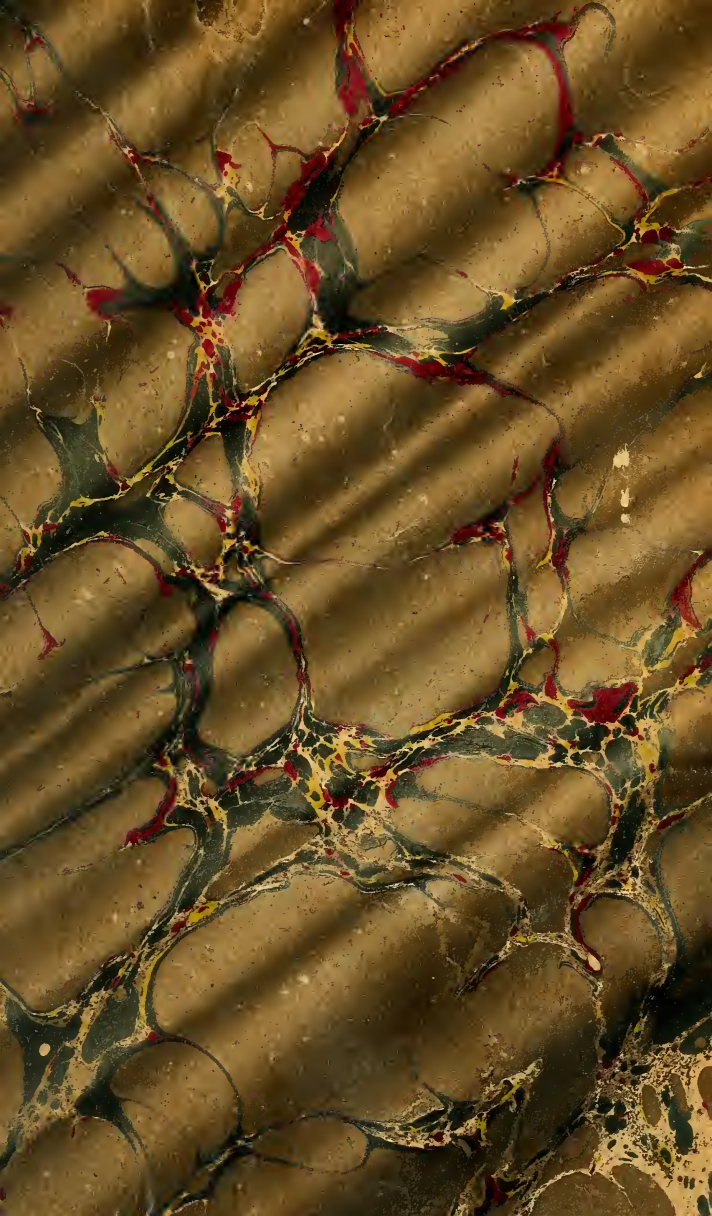


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ENCHIRIDION SYPHILITICUM.

ENCHIRIDION SYPHILITICUM:

OR,

DIRECTIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF VENEREAL PATIENTS.

—NOCET EMPTA DOLORE VOLUPTAS.

BY A. P. BUCHAN, M.D.

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MDCCXCVII.

Interea dulces fomnos, noctisque soporena
Omnia per terras animalia fessa trahebant :
ILLIS nulla quies aderat, sopor omnis in auras
Fugerat ; iis oriens ingrata aurora rubebat :
Iis inimica dies, inimicaque noctis imago.
Nulla Ceres illos, Bacchi non ulla juvabant
Munera ; non dulces epulæ, non copia rerum,
Non urbis, non ruris opes, non ulla voluptas.

HIERON. FRACASTORII Syphilide.

PREFACE.

THE author of the following pages has often, in the course of his practice, had occasion to wish, that he could put into the hands of patients, some short, plain, and intelligible account of the nature of venereal complaints. Ignorance is ever intractable. Those who are least acquainted with their real situation, are always most ready to find fault with their medical treatment. In no department of the practice of physic, is this more to be complained of, than in the cure of the venereal disease.

Misled by the slight appearance of that malady at its commencement, and deceived by the false pretensions of quackery, held out at the corner of every street, promising safe, secret, and expeditious cures; when patients are seriously informed, that a course of medicine continued for three or four weeks, is required to remove an apparently insignificant pustule, or an incipient running, they are apt to conceive themselves imposed upon, with a view to augment the emoluments of the practitioner.

Were people better acquainted with the real nature of their situation, when under the influence of the

syphilitic contagion, such uncandid suspicions would cease to exist. To involve the medical art in mystery, can be desirable to such only as are ignorant of their profession. The intelligent practitioner receives most satisfaction from attending patients, whose sense, and information, enable them to judge of the propriety of their treatment. With a view to impart this necessary knowledge; to qualify those, who have unfortunately contracted this disease, to distinguish whether they are treated in an honest and skilful manner, or the contrary; and especially to serve as a guide, or manual, for the author's own patients, which may not only supersede the perpetual repetition of verbal directions, but contribute also to expedite the period of a cure; these pages are now printed.

No particular forms of medicine are mentioned, because none are suitable to constitutions in general: nor is it the author's intention to encourage people to attempt curing themselves; but rather to enable them to co-operate properly with the views of their professional guide. A man's over-anxiety about his own welfare warps the judgment, however well he may be informed. In sickness, it is true wisdom, "TO TRUST IN THE PHYSICIAN."

New Store Street,
Bedford Square.

1797.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE venereal disease, Syphilis, or Pox, is a complaint always originating from infection*. Most commonly from venereal intercourse with a person already diseased. Various opinions have prevailed respecting its origin. It is most generally supposed to have been brought to Europe by the discoverers of America. To me this point has always appeared doubtful; because it has never been clearly proved that the first adventurers noticed any such complaint. And it is not probable, that had it existed, a disease possessing such peculiar and terrific features, would have escaped their attention. Ferdinand wrote the History of his father, Christopher Columbus, compiled from

* This position is confirmed by the various appellations the contagion has received. Syphilis, which was first applied to it by Fracastorius in his elegant poem with that title, he formed from *συν*, *cum*, and *φιλεω*, *amo*, although with poetical licence by him personified. Pox, is from *pogare*, which in the Bas-Breton signified to kiss, or have carnal connection with. The Bas-Breton, which is a dialect of the ancient Celtic, was at one period the common language of the continent, as the *lingua Franca* is at present of the shores of the Mediterranean.

his own papers. He notices the various diseases that afflicted the crew in general, as well as their leader in particular, till the year 1496, but mentions no such complaint as the venereal. It is known, indeed, that some of the crew of Columbus were infected after his return from his second voyage. But at that period, the disease was spreading with alarming rapidity over Europe; and what description of men were more likely to be infected with a complaint, communicated as the venereal disease commonly is, than sailors immediately on their return from a long voyage?

To me it has always appeared more probable, that syphilis originated among the Moors, while they remained in Africa, after their expulsion from Spain. The extreme misery of their situation, and its natural consequences, filth, and total disregard of moral restraint, added to the unhealthiness of the climate, might jointly produce this poison. For most of our contagious diseases we are indebted to Africa. The small-pox, and measles are well known to have been derived from that country. Some peculiar combination of circumstances must have given rise to each of them; for we can hardly suppose that they did always exist. And on the same grounds we may conceive, that some other peculiar combination of events might produce the venereal contagion.

This opinion is farther supported by the general analogy that exists between this and other contagious complaints. The most material distinction is, the slow action of the syphilitic poison compared with that of

the small-pox, measles, or plague. These different contagions have this peculiarity in common, no animal is susceptible of them but man. Brutes are indeed liable to epidemic diseases; but they are innoxious to us, as ours are to them. I believe there is no well authenticated instance of any other animal but man being affected with the small-pox, the measles, or the venereal disease. Various circumstances farther illustrative of the similarity of action of the variolous and syphilitic poisons, will occur in the more detailed description of the symptoms of this complaint.

Without presuming to decide a controversy, in the investigation of which more pains have been bestowed, than are warranted by its importance, I shall only add, that the period about which the early writers un-animously agree that the venereal disease appeared with decided symptoms as a new complaint, the year 1494, in the army of Charles VIII. of France, then besieging Naples, sufficiently coincides with the origin I have assigned to it. The Moors were expelled from Spain, by Ferdinand, King of Castile, in the Summer of the year 1492, to the amount of thirty thousand families. Multitudes perished from famine; and many dispersed themselves over Europe in search of a livelihood. Of those, some, doubtless, as soldiers of fortune would join the army then collecting to undertake the celebrated siege of Naples. By these means, the infection might be introduced among that heterogeneous assemblage of men. The individuals of the various nations of whom it was composed, mu-

tually accusing each other of being its authors. The Spaniards terming it the French disease, and the French the Neapolitan. None of them attributing it to the few, probably obscure individuals, from whom it really originated*.

This new and dreadful contagion rapidly spread its ravages over Europe; rearing its ghastly head, without discrimination, in the halls of princes, and the solitary cell of the monastic, and was generally attributed to the wrath of the Almighty, awakened by some peculiar delinquency of mankind. It being deemed impossible that those holy men could acquire this complaint in the way by which it is usually communicated.

At present, perhaps, no part of the known world is free from it. Our nautical discoverers having carried the fatal gift to the solitary islands of the Pacific ocean, and thereby poisoned the enjoyments, and destroyed the health of those previously happy people. Of this disease it is the peculiar characteristic, that from apparently the most trifling origin, a train of symptoms arise, gradually becoming more destructive, and which, if not checked by the operation of medicine, proceed with accumulated malignity to terminate the life of the unhappy sufferer. While it is to be lamented that human nature is liable to such a scourge, we should not forget to be thankful that a remedy exists, which,

* This notion of the origin of the venereal disease was first suggested to my mind by perusing the excellent work of Mr. Howard, and has since been confirmed by farther reading and reflection.

if wisely administered, hardly ever fails, even in the worst cases, to check its progress, and to restore health.

Loss of the hair, destruction of the nose, or of the organs of sight, caries of the bones of the skull, and other hideous symptoms, mentioned as common occurrences by the more early writers, setting at defiance the powers of remedies then known, and rendering the disease an object of just terror to mankind, are now rarely seen but in the wards of an hospital. The Chinese indeed, from some strange prejudice against the use of mercury, are said to send the wretched victims of this complaint to perish in a lonely island, under the accumulated misery of disease and famine.

This change is not to be attributed to any diminution of malignity in the complaint; but rather to the more generally diffused knowledge of its remedy, and particularly to earlier application for relief. Till within a few years, some notions of turpitude were connected with this complaint, which made it be concealed as long as concealment was possible. Happily such prejudices are now banished. Perhaps no disease exists in which the timely aid of medicine is of more importance. A symptom that might be eradicated in a few days, if these days are permitted to elapse, *re infecta*, may require as many weeks for its cure. The maxim of Horace should always be kept in mind by those who run the risk of infection.

Stultorum incurata pudor malus ulcera celat.

Being convinced that the venereal disease, in all its stages, is confined to the absorbing vessels and their glands, an opinion, the proofs of which I shall not at present enter upon. The better to enable those for whose perusal the following pages are intended, to comprehend them, I premise the following short, and I trust intelligible sketch of that part of the animal œconomy.

THE ABSORBENT VESSELS arise by an infinite number of minute and invisible branches from every part of the external surface of the body, and from every internal cavity. Those originating from the stomach and bowels, which, from the milky nature of their contents, are named *lacteals*, select and convey into the blood such parts of our aliment as are fit for nourishment. These again arising from all other parts of the body, which, from their pellucid watery appearance, are termed *lymphatics*, carry also into the blood such fluid, and, in some cases, solid matter as is presented to their mouths.

By these means the body is nourished, and all its fluids kept perpetually in a state of motion, nor do they ever stagnate but in consequence of disease. At various parts of their course, these vessels pass through glands, which no doubt operate important changes on their contents. When any deleterious or poisonous matter has been taken up by the absorbent vessels, for they do not possess the faculty of selecting that which

is injurious from that which is useful, as soon as it reaches a gland, swelling and inflammation take place, stopping, for a time, the free transit of the contents of the vessels, and forming an effort to obstruct the farther progress of the infectious matter. Thus, in children affected with the scald head, the glands of the neck swell; the matter of the small or of the great pox inserted into any part of the arm, produces enlargement of the glands in the axilla or arm-pit; and in like manner venereal bubo, most commonly appearing in the groin, is caused by the swelling and inflammation of the first set of glands, through which the absorbent vessels of the part where the infection is generally caught, pass. During a certain period, the disease may be considered as having proceeded no farther than this first gland. But when suppuration takes place, a quantity of matter is produced similar to that communicating the disease, which is quickly absorbed, and the whole system becomes affected. Bubo, however, is not constantly a fore-runner of general systematic affection. The diseased matter occasionally passes through the gland without causing inflammation, as in the inoculated small-pox, in which sometimes bubo takes place in the arm-pit; but more frequently it does not. In some cases, what are named the secondary symptoms of the disease may take place without any bubo having ever occurred. It is necessary to be aware of this fact, as such cases frequently occasion much doubt and anxiety to the patient as well as the practitioner.

Having premised these general observations, I shall now proceed to explain the symptoms of the disease, and point out the conduct by which the patient may co-operate with the practitioner, and by attention to which he may save himself much trouble, and tend greatly to accelerate the period of a safe cure.

OF
THE SYPHILIS,

OR
VENEREAL DISEASE.

THE venereal contagion, like most if not all morbid poisons, affecting the human body, is communicable only by contact. The notions that once prevailed of the possibility of being infected by drinking out of the same cup, or breathing the same air, with a person diseased, are now known to be unfounded. Indeed it is probably seldom contracted but in consequence of some wound or abrasion of the cuticle. The skin may be smeared with venereal, or variolous matter; but infection will not take place, except there is some slight solution of its continuity.

When venereal matter is applied to any part of the body from which the scarf-skin has been removed, or where it is peculiarly thin, as the glans penis, or the lip, in a short time a small ulcer is formed. Thence one or more lymphatic vessels absorb the pus, and con-

vey it to the next gland. The gland frequently, but not always, swells, and becomes inflamed, and in that state is called a Bubo; which seems to be an effort of nature to oppose the farther progress of the morbid poison. The matter formed in consequence of this inflammation, is found to be of the same nature with that which originally produced the disease, and being taken up by the next series of absorbing vessels, conveys the poison into the system in general. The consequences of which are deep-seated pains, most troublesome during the night, ulcerations of the throat, slow fever, and eruption of copper-coloured spots on the face and breast, by which the pains are somewhat alleviated, but not removed. The ulceration of the throat gradually spreads to the membranes lining the cavity of the nose. The thin bones which support these membranes, and often the palate of the mouth, are affected and in time destroyed, and the nose, losing its support, sinks. The eruptions on the skin ulcerate, and the ulcers become very deep, quickly reaching the bone. The larger bones of the thighs, legs, and arms, become affected with swellings termed Nodes, and the thinner bones, as those of the skull, are eroded by small ulcers, frequently penetrating their whole substance. Worn out by the irritation of these and other symptoms, not necessary to enumerate at present, the wretched victim of disease resigns a life which has long ceased to be desirable.

This general view of the effects of venereal contagion will, I trust, convince every reader of the ne-

cessity of endeavouring, as early as possible, to remove, by the assistance which art affords, a disease whose mortal career nature makes no effectual effort to withstand; I shall now proceed to a more detailed account of particular symptoms.

OF CHANCER.

SUPPOSING the venereal disease to be contracted, as it generally is, by coition, the first symptom is a small pimple filled with a watery fluid on some part of the glans penis, or prepuce. Those persons who are liable, on erection, to slight fissures of the fore-skin, by no means an uncommon case, are peculiarly subject to contract this complaint. It is hardly possible indeed for such to be connected with a diseased woman and escape. These fissures usually arise from an unnatural tightness of the part, and may be relieved by a slight operation. The pimple itches, and when scratched, a small portion of tenacious fatty matter is found adhering to the bottom of the sore, which it is very difficult to remove; and if forcibly rubbed off it soon re-appears. The circumference of this little sore is red, and its edges generally project a little above the surface of the neighbouring parts. This symptom has been termed a Chancre.

There is also another species of chancre which is superficial, spreads rapidly, discharges a considerable

quantity of thin matter, and is often very painful. The variety of appearances which this symptom occasionally assumes, depend more on the constitution of the person affected than on any difference in the matter communicating the complaint. I have indeed seen in the same person both these species of chancre, at different periods, which, probably arose from some peculiarity in the state of his health at the time of being infected.

It is of much importance to attend to this appearance at an early period ; because, within a certain time after an infection, it is possible, by means of local remedies alone, to remove a symptom, which is the source of all the evils accompanying the further progress of the disease. The propriety of trusting to these local remedies has been questioned by some of the most judicious writers on this subject. In my own practice I have so often succeeded in preventing, by their use, the farther progress of the complaint, as well as the necessity of taking mercury, that I have no hesitation in recommending the attempt ; if it fails, the patient can have recourse to the usual mode of cure with very little loss of time. This mode of eradicating the disease, at an early period, is principally applicable to the small defined species of chancre. A young gentleman, by the advice of a friend, washed a spreading chancre on the glans, with a solution of lunar caustic, the consequence of which was a violent inflammation, and disease, that rendered a severe surgical operation, and

a confinement of several months requisite to effect a cure.

When a chancre has continued for some time, it is generally accompanied with a thickening and contraction of the prepuce. If in this state the prepuce is forcibly drawn back so as to denude the glans, it often becomes impossible to bring it forward again. The free circulation of the blood being thus prevented, the glans swells, attended with much pain, which, sometimes terminates in mortification. This symptom is termed **PARAPHIMOSIS**; and when there is any tendency to contraction in the prepuce, patients should be careful not to retract it unnecessarily, lest it should be thus induced.

When the contraction of the prepuce takes place so as to render it impossible to uncover the glans, it is termed **PHIMOSIS**; while this continues, it is very often impossible, by any means, to cure the sores which are thus concealed. They should be kept clean by throwing up tepid water, or infusion of camomile flowers, between the glans and prepuce by means of a syringe. Relief is likewise often obtained by supporting the penis in a perpendicular direction against the belly by means of a soft handkerchief passed round the waist. Care must be taken that the penis do not rub against the breeches. During the continuance of this symptom exercise should be as much as possible avoided.

Patients ought to be aware that it is frequently necessary to remove this contracted state of the prepuce

by means of an operation. For want of this being done in due time, I have seen the lives of several persons nearly sacrificed, and others irrecoverably lose the whole glans, or continue during life to discharge the urine through half a dozen different apertures in the urethra. On laying open a contracted prepuce the glans is sometimes found beset with numberless excrescences of various lengths, which have been compared, not unaptly, to the bristles of a hedge-hog. These appear to be the nervous papillæ of the glans exposed by the erosion of their natural covering. In consequence of this operation, which is very often too long delayed, I have seen a deep sore heal in the course of a week, which had in vain been attempted to be cured by a course of mercury sedulously persevered in for several months.

From a wish to avoid giving pain, it is a measure that I have often known too long delayed, but never yet saw it had recourse to at a period too early. Those who are obliged to submit to it may derive some consolation from knowing, that it renders them less liable in future to contract the disease.

The only application necessary to chancres, is daily ablution with tepid water; a little lint may be applied to absorb the matter, and if they are very painful, this lint may be dipped in sweet oil. In general, all other local applications are injurious. The cure should be effected by the operation of mercury on the constitution in general. The time required, from three weeks to a month, and a certain degree

of salivary affection of the mouth is always necessary. When a chancre is properly cured, the place where it was situated should be perfectly smooth and level with the surrounding skin. If any excavation or excrescence remains, it is to be suspected that the disease has not been completely eradicated, and there is reason to fear that it may break out again at some future period.

OF BUBO.

A BUBO is a painful inflammation and swelling of a lymphatic gland. It is generally caused by the irritation of the morbid poison absorbed from a venereal sore. The first cluster of glands with which the lymphatic vessels of those parts where the venereal disease is commonly received, communicate, being situated in the groin, buboes are generally formed in that part of the body. A hard cord-like substance is often felt under the skin, running in a direction between the place of a chancre and a bubo, which is a lymphatic vessel swelled and inflamed by the passage of the contagious matter. The inflammation of the gland seems to be a temporary effort of the constitution, to resist the farther progress of the poison. As the whole of the lymphatic vessels arising from the parts of generation do not constantly pass through the glands of the groin, the constitution may be affected with the venereal disease, without the

intervention of a bubo. In that case, the symptoms immediately succeeding a chancre, will be sore throat, cutaneous eruptions, and pains of the bones.

A bubo is frequently produced by the application of some irritating matter to a chancre, which seems to rouse the torpid absorbents into action; such applications are usually made with a view to accelerate the healing of a chancre; but in order to avoid the pain and trouble of a bubo, it is better to wait patiently the healing of the original sore by the general action of the remedy.

Bubo being commonly seated in a part which is considerably affected by motion, the pain attending it is increased by exercise; rest, therefore, should be indulged as far as possible. The application of a mild poultice, moderately warm, tends to diminish pain. It should be renewed twice a day*. It may be retained in its place by a bandage put round the waist, and another brought between the thighs, or still better by the common cotton suspensary bandage, sold by all truss-makers.

Whether it be the best practice to discuss a bubo, or to permit it to suppurate, has long been matter of dispute. It would be proper previously to determine, whether art is possessed of any means capable of effecting such a purpose. I am acquainted with none, except the use of mercury; so that the proper statement of the question is, whether it be right to administer

* For an easy mode of making it, see Appendix.

the specific, on the first appearance of this symptom, or to wait till suppuration takes place. With respect to this point there can be no doubt. As soon as a swelling in the groin is determined to be venereal, mercury should be given. Under this treatment, if it gradually diminishes and finally disappears, well and good; but if there be much inflammation, I know nothing that will prevent the formation of pus, but rest and abstinence, as tending to diminish action in the system at large.

When suppuration does take place, the sore is observed to heal most kindly when it breaks of itself. But if the bulk or pain of the tumour renders it troublesome, it may easily be opened by means of a quickly operating caustic, or the small puncture of a lancet, and the matter be permitted to ooze out by degrees. A small piece of lint, with a little simple ointment, may be applied to the orifice, and over that a pledgit of tow to absorb the matter. For my own part, I would rather see a bubo suppurate than disperse. In the former case, the sore usually heals in a few days; and when it is healed the patient has the satisfaction of knowing that he is thoroughly well. In the latter, a few hard knots will often obstinately resist the action of the mercury, and protract the cure, while it is difficult to determine whether they are venereal or not. And there is certainly more risk of the disease re-appearing at a future period.

Frequently the sore, which is the consequence of suppuration taking place in a bubo, does not heal so

kindly ; but, on the contrary, enlarges fast, with re-torted edges, great pain, and a discharge of thin ichorous matter. These malignant appearances generally take place in that peculiarity of constitution termed scrophulous. They are also frequently the consequence of pushing the use of mercury too far. And it is of the utmost importance to be able to determine whether they are produced by the disease, or by the remedy. If a sore has once been determined to be venereal, it is too common to suppose that it must always continue so, and that it can only be cured by urging the use of mercury. The most dreadful, and even fatal, consequences sometimes result from acting on this opinion. I once saw a young man with five large open sores in his groins, which, while he was daily using a large quantity of the strongest preparation of mercury, spread so fast as to threaten the destruction of all the surrounding parts, and even loss of life. By leaving off mercury, going to the country, and using a milk diet, the sores healed ; and in a few weeks he completely recovered his health and strength. As it would be very difficult to convey by words any description that would enable a person not of the medical profession to distinguish a mercurial from a venereal sore, I shall not attempt it. My intention is to warn the uninformed of the bad consequences of pushing a mercurial course too far, of which I have seen many lamentable examples.

Sometimes after a bubo is compleatly healed, the skin does not recover its adherence to the parts underneath, but continues loose. Although this is, perhaps,

of no consequence, yet it alarms the patient's mind. I have repeatedly produced a re-union by drawing a few threads through the cavity. I have also seen great quantities of lymph discharged from a bubo during the whole time of its continuing open, which seemed to come from a ruptured cell of the gland; but when the fore completely healed, the flux ceased.

OF SECONDARY SYMPTOMS.

THIS appellation is commonly given to those symptoms which appear in consequence of the whole constitution being affected. The venereal matter is so far altered by passing through the first series of glands, that it does not produce irritation in the next; neither is the matter of secondary sores capable of communicating infection.

The first symptoms of the constitutional form of the venereal disease, similar to those of many other contagious complaints, are sore throat, eruptions, and slight fever. The order in which these symptoms appear is, perhaps, not perfectly determined; but I think I have oftener seen sore throat without eruptions, than eruptions without sore throat. The fever is of the hectic kind, encreasing towards evening; but no relief is experienced on the appearance of the eruptions. The appetite is gradually impaired, a peculiar kind of listlessness is felt, and the countenance acquires a ghastly appearance.

THE VENEREAL SORE THROAT is attended with little or no pain: it first attracts attention by a slight sensation of pricking, at the time of swallowing food. On examination, an ulceration is perceived on one or both sides of the throat, covered with a thick white matter, very much resembling the fat of bacon: the palate and surrounding parts are of a dusky red. This species of sore throat may easily be distinguished from the inflammatory, by the comparative absence of pain; and from the putrid, by the slowness of its progress, and the difference of appearance on examination. But there is a kind of sore throat which seems to be the effect of intemperance, and particularly of the habitual use of ardent spirits in delicate constitutions, from which it is often very difficult to discriminate the venereal. This species of sore throat may with propriety be termed the Aphous. It has the same lardaceous appearance as the venereal, but not quite so dark a colour; neither are the ulcerations so deep, although often more extensive: it is not painful, and is accompanied with great general debility, and a peculiar sunk cast of countenance. From confounding this species of sore throat with the venereal, the most unfortunate consequences may ensue, as no two complaints can require a more opposite mode of treatment. To this mistake, I once saw an instance of life being very nearly sacrificed. In sore throat, no prudent practitioner ought to administer mercury, without being completely satisfied that it is venereal: if he has any doubts, let him wait with patience till they are remo-

ved by the appearance of other unequivocal symptoms, and not trifle with the welfare of his patient.

Mistakes of a contrary nature sometimes also take place. I was once called to visit a lady, who had been confined to her bed during a fortnight, and was taking medicines for what was supposed to be a putrid sore throat, attended with petechiæ, and constant severe head-ache. The ulcer in the throat, as well as the eruptions, turned out to be venereal; the pain in the head was the consequence of a node on the frontal bone; all of which were completely removed in due time, by the use of mercury.

In this symptom, I in general disapprove of the use of mercurial gargles. They do no good, tend to induce salivation before the system is properly saturated with mercury; and, when that state occurs, greatly encrease the soreness of the mouth. Barley water, infusion of figs, or of sage, are sufficient to keep the parts clean, which is all that is required.

VENEREAL ERUPTIONS are usually the concomitants of ulceration of the throat. They generally appear first on the forehead, or the breast; but I have seen them very early, and particularly numerous, on the palms of the hands. Their general appearance is that of spots, about the size of spangles, of a copper colour, not at all raised above the level of the skin. In a short time their surface becomes rough, and falls off in white scales, leaving a slight pit. This process is repeated till at length the pit deepens into an ulcer,

discharging a thin sanious matter; and at other times throws out a rugged warty excrescence. With these eruptions the skin is often so completely covered, as to resemble a piece of dirty copper.

Venereal eruptions are liable to be confounded with various leprous, and what are termed scorbutic defecations of the skin; from which they are only to be distinguished by a consideration of other concomitant circumstances. One peculiar species of cutaneous eruption, which I have often traced to the intemperate use of distilled spirits, is frequently liable to be mistaken for venereal. It requires, however, a very different mode of treatement, and never fails to be exasperated by the use of mercury.

NODES, which are tumors, situated in the center and hardest parts of the bones, soon follow the appearance of eruptions. Their situation may be accounted for, according to the general principle already mentioned, by supposing that the few and slender absorbents, arising from these solid parts, soonest cease to perform their functions, while the exhaling arteries, unaffected by the poison, continue to supply the boney matter, which must necessarily accumulate and form a hard tumor. They are distinguished from other swellings by their situation, their extreme hardness; and by the hot pain attending them becoming more intense during the night. This pain is mitigated by cold, and I have often known sleep induced by wrapping a towel, previously immersed in cold water, round the affected limb.

VENEREAL ULCERS, arise sometimes from the inflammation and suppuration of a node, of which a diseased bone, and long protracted sore are often the consequences. At other times, they take place on the site of a blotch, which ulcerates and gradually deepens till it reaches the bone. Ulcers of this kind are distinguished by their giving but little pain. I have seen a great many on the body of one patient; into every one of which, a probe might be passed to the bone, of which he was hardly sensible.

When an ulceration of this kind takes place on the forehead, and affects the bone, it is termed **CORONA VENERIS**. The bones of the head being thin, are soon destroyed; and it is no uncommon occurrence to meet with perforations reaching to the brain. Sometimes proportions of the skull protuberate in various shapes, not unlike the sprouts of coral.

When a venereal ulcer fixes on the membranes and bones of the nose, it is called **OZOENA**. On account of the delicate texture of the parts, its progress is often very rapid. I have known the whole palate destroyed in the course of a week. The thin plates of bone situated within the nose, soon become affected and lose their vitality. The discharge from these sores is extremely foetid, and constitutes one of the most loathsome and offensive symptoms of the venereal disease. If the bones of this part are once affected, notwithstanding the most judicious treatment, the complaint will continue till the diseased part exfoliates, which frequently requires a considerable length of time. If the disease has fixed

its seat on these parts, the patient may indeed be thankful, if he escapes without some degree of deformity. I know several examples of the nose being entirely lost, either from the fault of the practitioner, in not keeping up the mercurial action for a sufficient length of time, or the reluctance of the patient to submit to what he, perhaps, thought too rigorous treatment.

Various symptoms which occur at advanced periods of this disease, till its final termination in death, might be here detailed. One that I have not unfrequently met with, is a slight inflammation of the eyes and dimness of sight, attended, perhaps, with a venereal wart, or some other trifling symptom, to which the patient pays no attention. The appearance of the eyes is peculiar, and readily distinguished from other inflammations, by those who are in habits of seeing this complaint. I have always known it removed by mercury.—Fissures in the palms of the hands, or about the anus, and swellings of the same parts, which have been termed RHAGADES and CONDYLOMATA, take place at various advanced stages of the complaint.

To enumerate any more symptoms would be useless to those, for whose perusal these pages are intended. As it is not to be imagined that they would permit the disease to proceed so far, without assistance.

Happily, indeed, these and other formidable symptoms of the venereal disease, as loss of hair, teeth, and eyes, mentioned as common occurrences, by the early writers on this complaint, are now rarely met with, but in the wards of an hospital. A knowledge of the

proper mode of treatment is more generally diffused; the diseased apply at an earlier period for assistance; and various charitable institutions rescue the lower orders of society, from the more fatal depredations of this dreadful malady.

OF
THE CURE
OF
THE VENEREAL DISEASE.

IT was a remark of the late Mr. John Hunter, that
“ Nothing shews more the ungrateful or unsettled
“ mind of man, than his treatment of mercury; for if
“ there is such a thing as a specific, mercury is one
“ for the venereal disease. Yet mankind are in pur-
“ suit of other specifics for this disease, as if specifics
“ were more common than diseases.”

Notwithstanding the truth of this observation, when
the many unpleasant effects, both immediate and re-
mote, attending the use of mercury, are taken into
consideration, it is not surprising that some more easy
mode of cure should continue to be sought after.

That the venereal disease has been cured, and of
course, still may be cured by other means than the use
of mercury, no impartial enquirer can possibly doubt.
But whether any such means, at present known, are, up-

on the whole, less unpleasant, or more safe, is a separate, as well as a more important object of enquiry. During many years after the first appearance of the venereal disease in Europe, mercury was not known to be a remedy for it. By the most early writers, who certainly cured the disease, it is not even mentioned. And when the virtues of guajacum were discovered, the cure seems no longer to have been a matter of difficulty.

The reputation of this medicine was carried to the highest pitch by Ulricus Hutten, celebrated as a man of letters, the cotemporary and opponent of Erasmus, who published the history of his own recovery from a deplorable state of the venereal disease, by the use of guajacum, which had for years resisted repeated courses of mercury. Supported by such authority, this drug immediately came into general use over all Europe. But many who employed it did not comply with that rigorous abstinence, and strict confinement absolutely necessary for ensuring success. They expected, while living in their usual manner, provided a sufficient quantity of the remedy was taken, that a cure would be performed; and when disappointed, instead of acknowledging themselves to be in fault, they blamed the medicine. Guajacum thus fell into disrepute, and remained neglected, till its use was revived by the celebrated Boerhaave. That great man well understood, as he had most diligently investigated, the nature of the venereal disease. In the preface to the *Aphrodisiacus*, he says, "I well remember with what pleasure I first peru-

“ sed the tract of Ulric Hutten, having at that time, under my care, a noble patient, who having followed the advice of the first physicians, and in vain tried all the powers of mercury, was given over as desperate, and yet by this mode of cure, was restored to perfect health.” He mentions another case of a man who had lost a finger, and the bone of one of whose legs was carious, also cured by guajacum. He says, likewise, that during the time the sweat poured forth in the warm-bath, tinged with the green hue of the decoction of guajacum, he has seen the dry scabs of the ulcers fall off, and the healthy skin beneath appear. The judgment, the candour, and the integrity of Boerhaave, have never, I believe, been called in question *.

* Pulchre memini, quanto perfusus gaudio, Huttenii libellum quondam perlegerim, quum ea forte tempestate curationi meæ se dederet nobilis æger, qui incassum optimorum medicorum consilia sequutus, atque frustra hydragyri vim expertus, pro desperato relictus fuerat, tamen recte dein hoc methodo convaluit.

“ Iterum:” Videre memini, juvenem penitissime ad ossa usque infectum, hoc tractatum methodo, scil. guajaco, tanto impetu ejecisse sudores, ut in vigore operationis, subviridis e guajaco sudor elevaret, separaretque, ulcerum escharas vacillantes jam, et inferne labefactas. Reminiscor lætus, quod juvenem sanaverim, jam sanissimum virum, et patremfamilias, cui diversis corporis locis ossa tabefacta adeo, ut in digito manus articulus unus exciderit, in crure plurima loca cariosa spectarentur. Hac methodo rite exculta, atque observata, ossiculinarium, fragmenta palati, separata, cætera sincera reliquerunt.

Boerhaave in Prefatione Aphrodisiaci.—*Lugd. Bat.* 1728.

These striking facts, as well as infinite others, that are to be met with in perusing the early writers on this disease, have not, however, prevented guajacum from again relapsing into oblivion ; and I suspect there is not at present any medical man in Europe who can, from his own experience, pronounce whether guajacum will cure the venereal disease or not. The experiments of Mr. Hunter, on this subject, are wholly inconclusive ; the administration of the remedy in none of the cases he relates, being either conducted in that mode, or accompanied by those circumstances, formerly reckoned indispensable to its performing a cure.

The patient was strictly confined during a period of at least six weeks to a chamber, kept by means of fires at a temperature considerably warmer than that of the atmosphere at all seasons. His solid food was wholly confined to toasted bread and raisins, of which the daily allowance never exceeded six or at most eight ounces, and during one fortnight of the time, it was limited to four. His sole drink two or three quarts of strong decoction of guajacum ; besides the occasional use of a hot vapour bath, continued till the sweat exuded, tinged with the green colour of the decoction*. During this time, the patient became extremely emaciated ; he was never free from the sense of hunger ;

* That this singular appearance takes place, I know to be a fact ; having myself seen the linen of a patient stained of a green hue, by the exudation from his skin, during a course of guajacum.

his hands looked withered; and the veins of the extremities appeared no longer to convey blood; and even after a cure was obtained, it was requisite to be extremely cautious in returning to the usual habits of life.

To those who are of opinion that it would be an important improvement in the practice of medicine, to be able to cure the venereal disease by means of vegetables, I would seriously recommend a comparison of the discipline and privations requisite to ensure the efficacy of guajacum, with the restraints that usually accompany a course of mercury, properly conducted.

Might I be permitted to indulge a hypothetical conjecture on this subject; it would be that, perhaps, no method of curing the venereal disease, perfectly free from disagreeable concomitants, will ever be discovered. The final cause of the existence of venereal contagion appears to be the prevention of promiscuous venery; which again is connected with the preservation of the human species; so that, although individuals do not perish from its effects, yet the chance of contracting the disease will always continue not to be a matter of indifference*.

The speed and certainty with which mercury eradicates the symptoms of the venereal disease in every stage of its progress, has long, and deservedly, conferred on it a decided superiority over every other re-

* The *flagellum Dei in scortatores*, is an old appellation, which, I suspect, this complaint will always continue to merit.

medy; and, on the judicious use of some of its preparations, every candid practitioner at present rests his hopes of a cure. While at the same time, it is proper to know, that in cases which resist its powers, there are other resources which may be relied on with confidence.

ON THE ACTION OF MERCURY.

MERCURY taken into the body, in its metallic or crude state, produces no effects, except in so far as it is a ponderous fluid. When used as a remedy for disease, it is always exhibited in form of a calx*. Chemistry teaches us that metals are formed into calces by combination with oxygene, or the principle of acidity, termed also pure or vital air, which enters in the proportion of about a fourth part into the composition of our atmosphere. This species of gas is known to be a very active agent in many processes of the animal œconomy; it is that part of the air, which essentially maintains combustion, and, which taken into the lungs, supports life; it imparts the florid colour to

* In the mercurial ointment, it is calcined by triture, and the longer it is rubbed, even to the extent of weeks, the more powerfully it acts. In the *mercurius calcinatus*, it is united with the oxygene of the atmosphere, and in other preparations with that of various acids.

arterial blood, and is, by some, supposed to be the principle of irritability itself. With oxygene, mercury easily combines, and readily separates from it; or, in other words, is easily calcined; but not retaining the oxygene very firmly, is readily restored to its metallic form. This latter process is supposed to take place in the human body; silver and gold carried in the pocket become discoloured, and small drops of pure mercury have been observed on the surface of a plaster, covering a fore on the leg of a person using mercury internally.

Hence, I think it may be fairly concluded, that it is the oxygene, which, by some process in the animal œconomy, is separated from the mercurial preparation, and which is known to be a very active substance, that performs the cure, and not the mercury, which is an inert one. This opinion is strongly corroborated by the recently discovered mode of curing the venereal disease, by nitrous acid, by the oxygenated muriate of kali, and other substances, containing a large proportion of oxygene, attached to a base from which it is easily separated. These experiments afford, indeed, a strong proof that it is the oxygene which cures the disease; but little else appears to have, as yet, been gained by them. The effects of these preparations on the constitution, seem to be equally unpleasant as those of mercury.

Admitting then this explanation of the action of mercury, which, in truth, is at present only an hypothesis, supported, indeed, by a considerable number

of facts, and accounting, in a very plausible manner, for most of the phenomena attending the cure of the venereal disease, but requiring still farther experiments to ascertain its veracity. There are two ways in which we may suppose the oxygene to produce its effects. It may combine with the venereal poison, and neutralize it; but it is more probable, that it acts by increasing the irritability of the system in general, to such a degree, as to enable it to overcome the action of the poison.

A person, during the first few days of a mercurial course, finds himself in better health and spirits than usual; he gradually becomes more and more irritable, and the pulse quickens, till about the commencement of salivation, at which time he is highly susceptible of the slightest stimulus. The constitution at this period is changed, so as to resemble that of a child, extremely irritable, and, in like manner, as in infancy, saliva flows profusely from the mouth. An immoderate discharge of saliva is by no means an uncommon symptom in states of great irritability, or what are commonly termed nervous habits.

This view of the action of mercury shews the propriety of avoiding, during its use, stimuli of every kind, which, owing to the increased aptitude of the body to receive impressions, act with redoubled force, and at the same time oppose the curative intention of the remedy. Contrary to general opinion, I am convinced, that even opium, though frequently com-

bined with mercury, interferes with its salutary effects. Hence, also, may be deduced the propriety of a bland demulcent diet. The irritability of the intestines being augmented along with that of the rest of the system, the same kind of aliment, which, during health, is taken with impunity, will now act as a purgative.

The fallacy of the common-place jargon about mercury being a poison, and of the great danger and evil consequences attending its use, becomes likewise apparent. No doubt, mercury, if too long, or improperly administered, like every other active medicine, will do mischief. I am confident, however, that no other article of the *Materia Medica*, capable of doing as much good, does as little harm; and that the bad consequences occasionally produced by it, arise either from imprudence on the part of the patient, or ignorance on that of the practitioner.

ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF MERCURY, AND THE CAUTIONS TO BE OBSERVED DURING ITS USE.

MUCH mischief has arisen from the promises of quick and easy cures, held out by those, who, to enhance the opinion of their own abilities, or humour the prejudices of their patients, have made light of the treatment of venereal complaints in general. It is of importance to those who have contracted this disor-

der to be convinced that they labour under a serious disease, which, if not counteracted by remedies, will rapidly increase; and that by submitting to a certain degree of restraint, they can do much to facilitate the cure, as well as to prevent their constitution from being ultimately impaired.

There are two principal modes of conducting a mercurial course; the alterative, during which the patient goes abroad, and pursues his usual vocations, under some degree of restraint with regard to diet, and attention to avoid cold; or the more rigid plan of strict confinement to the house during the whole time of the cure.

Where circumstances permit it to be complied with, there can be no doubt, that the mode under confinement is not only the shortest road to health, but that also by which the constitution is least liable to permanent injury. When this plan is adopted, the patient is supposed to confine himself entirely to one or two apartments, kept by means of fires, at an equable temperature, if the weather be cold. Mercury is administered in such a manner as speedily to affect the mouth; its operation is regulated by the more or less free admission of fresh air, the total exclusion of which is by no means necessary. The more simple and free from stimulating materials the diet is, with due regard to the usual habits of the patient, the less it interferes with the salutary action of the specific. Farinaceous matter, as gruel, or decoction of sarsaparilla, with bread, forms a good breakfast or supper; broth

or soup, with a small proportion of animal food, is proper for dinner. The smaller quantity of fermented liquor that is used the better ; white wine is to be preferred to any other *. Under a course of this kind, a complete cure of any primary symptom, or even of a slight degree of sore throat with eruptions, may be effected in the course of three, or at farthest four weeks. When the bones are affected, a longer period is required. On the termination of such a course, health and vigour return with surprising promptitude.

The generality of patients, however, are unable or unwilling to submit to such strict discipline; it becomes, therefore, necessary to accommodate the mode of cure to their particular situations ; and, with a due degree of attention, to avoid those practices which are peculiarly incompatible with the action of mercury, multitudes are daily cured while following their usual employments.

It has already been observed, that during a course of mercury the irritability of the system is much increased. Every irregularity, which tends to derange the constitution when in health, now acts with augmented energy. It becomes, therefore, necessary

* Nowhere is this disease more speedily and effectually cured than in the Lock Hospital ; which I am inclined to attribute, in a great measure, to the simplicity of diet to which patients are, with great propriety, restricted in that truly humane institution, which offers protection to those victims of misery and vice, whom the fastidious delicacy of the world refuses even to pity.

to avoid every species of intemperance; to guard against cold by additional cloathing, as a flannel waistcoat over or under the shirt; and to be careful not to be exposed to the air of the night, which is peculiarly injurious. During the use of mercury, the irritability of the alimentary canal becomes greatly increased; getting wet, or sitting with damp feet, will frequently induce violent griping and purging. Acids taken as a part of diet, or any thing that is liable to sour on the stomach, produce the same effects. Sallads, unripe fruits, pies or puddings composed of them, punch, beer, particularly if stale, it becomes necessary, therefore, to abstain from. To observe so low a diet as that recommended under confinement, would be improper. Animal food, with negus, or spirits and water, may be used in moderation. I have found nothing so effectual in preventing the derangement of the organs of digestion as the use of mucilagenous aliment. I always, therefore, recommend the decoction of sarsaparilla * to be taken during the whole course of the cure. If that cannot be conveniently obtained, a basin of water-gruel, with a glass of wine or brandy, is the best substitute. It is also of importance to know that a sudden fit of griping, which frequently occurs, may be relieved by a basin of soup, or still more effectually by a glass of warm spirits and water, with the addition of ginger. These remarks may appear trifling; but the intention of these pages is to acquaint invalids

* See Appendix.

with such trifles as these, on which their comfort and welfare often depend.

It is absolutely necessary that a course of this kind should terminate with a certain degree of soreness of the mouth and spitting. If this increases much, confinement to the house becomes necessary, till the cure be completed. There is nothing which is more generally complained of, than the pain attending a sore mouth, produced by mercury. It may be somewhat relieved by washing with tepid water, port wine and water, or a weak solution of alum or white vitriol. It cannot, however, be altogether removed; and the patient must learn to bear with patience the evil which is immediately connected with his recovery. In this state, nothing is eaten with more pain than dry bread; biscuit soaked in warm water, gives much less uneasiness. The sensation of the palate often becomes so deranged, that the patient loses his relish for things, that in health, were particularly agreeable to him. I have frequently known this occur with respect to tea. In such cases, infusion of balm is generally much relished, although, perhaps, at other times, unpleasant.

In some peculiar constitutions, mercury, after having been taken for a considerable time, without producing any effect, will suddenly burst forth, if I may use the expression, in a violent salivation, accompanied with painful ulceration of the tongue and fauces. I have seen saliva discharged to the amount of two or three quarts a-day, for a fortnight together, attended with total inability of speaking or swallowing. In such

eases little can be done to check this discharge with safety. Serious mischief indeed, as convulsions, total loss of digestion, and even insanity, have been the consequences of making the attempt. The body should be kept open by gentle purgatives; the warm-bath is useful, and plentiful dilution with barley water, in which nitre is dissolved. To take spirits, wine, or any thing stimulating, is very improper. I have seen two cases, where, in consequence of the use of mercury, the whole cuticle or scarf-skin peeled off. In one of these, the extremities continued long raw and very painful. These cases are mentioned to warn patients of what may sometimes be the inevitable effects of the use of mercury, even under the most proper management.

But the most dreadful consequences, are those which result from the too long protracted use of the specific; which, after a certain period ceases to be a remedy, and becomes a real poison. The precise time, when this takes place, it is not always easy to discover. When venereal sores, after healing to a certain degree, under the use of mercury, become painful, and instead of contracting, begin to increase in size, there is reason to suspect that the remedy has been too long persisted in. If the practitioner has taken up an opinion that a sore, which was once venereal, must always continue so; and instead of diminishing, augments the quantity of mercury, the most disastrous consequences may ensue. From mistakes of this kind, I have known several brought very near the

gates of death ; and many, I am well persuaded, are continually falling victims to it. It is frequently the result of relying on advertised nostrums for a cure. If the patient does not recover during their use, he is urged to persist, as well as to use larger quantities, till the mischief they produce has gone too far to be repaired. Such cases require milk diet, sarsaparilla, opium, bark, and above all, an immediate transition into pure country air. Owing to their success in some remarkable instances of this kind, certain vaunted remedies have acquired an unjust reputation, for curing the venereal disease. To discriminate with certainty, when a sore ceases to be venereal, and is increased by the action of mercury is frequently very difficult ; nor is it less important to the patient, that this point should be properly determined.

Since mercury has been in general use, as a remedy for the venereal disease, a great variety of preparations of it have been introduced, and, by turns, extolled as possessing peculiar excellencies. They may all be comprised in three classes. The metal is united with oxygene, either by triture, by heat, or by chymical combination with some acid. To appreciate their relative virtues, would, here, be an useless attempt. Every one selects that which experience has taught him to confide in, and practice enabled to manage with dexterity. To the patient, it is of more importance to be informed, that there are two principal methods of exhibiting this remedy, externally by fumigation or fric-

tion*, and internally, in form of pills, drops, &c. The former is attended with fatigue, disgust, and uncertainty, and is best adapted to the mode of cure, under confinement. The principal objection to the latter, has been that it tended to disorder the organs of digestion. By the selection of a proper preparation and attention on the part of the patient to the dietetic regulations already detailed, I have, in general, found it practicable to administer mercury internally, with as little disturbance to the faculties of digestion, as when applied to the external surface of the body. When taken into the stomach, from which and the intestines, absorption is much more rapid than from the surface of the body, it acts with more certainty, and a much smaller quantity is necessary to be used. The constitution is the least disturbed when the whole of the daily dose is taken at bed-time. As the cure seems to depend on the accumulation of the remedy to a certain degree in the system, its use ought to be persisted in with uniform regularity. The omission of one or two days may protract the period of a cure for as many weeks.

* The disease has of late been cured by applying small quantities of a mercurial ointment to the soles of the feet, which the friction, produced by walking, carries into the system.

OF
THE CLAP *,
OR
VIRULENT GONORRHŒA.

Principiis obsta, sero medicina paratur,
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.

IT has been doubted whether this local complaint be produced by the same virus that is the cause of syphilis, or whether it be a separate and distinct disease. This question appears to have been suggested by the description given by some writers, of a disease termed

* As the constitutional form of the venereal disease acquired its common name from the mode in which infection was generally received, the local complaint seems to have derived its vulgar appellation from the place where it was most commonly met with. In French, *clapiere*, and in old English, *claper*, signifies a rabbit hole, and was formerly used to denominate those districts of great towns, where the lowest orders of public women were obliged to reside, and where, of course, this disease was most likely to be met with,

arsura, or the infirmity of brenning, prior to the introduction of the venereal disease into Europe. I have myself seen more than one instance of a discharge from the urethra, accompanied with considerable pain in making water, where there could not be the least suspicion of venereal infection. It lasted for a few days, and disappeared, with no other remedy than plentiful dilution, and without communicating infection. It seems now, however, generally agreed, that the virulent gonorrhœa is the consequence of venereal matter applied to, and irritating a secreting surface. Those persons who have a copious secretion between the glans and prepuce, are liable from the contact of venereal matter to have it increased in quantity and virulence, forming an external clap; and the mucus lining the nose and eyes, may, in like manner, be rendered virulent and infectious by the contact of venereal matter.

Gonorrhœa may appear at any period from twenty-four hours, till three weeks or more after the time of infection. Its earliest symptoms are a slight, not disagreeable itching at the orifice of the urinary canal, accompanied with a kind of transparent redness extending a little over the glans. These are succeeded by a slight pain in passing the last drops of urine, and a discharge of a little glairy fluid, staining the linen of a yellow or green colour. The colour of these stains, and the peculiar appearance of the glans, an idea of which is best conveyed by comparing it to that of a ripening cherry, are the only means by which

it is possible, at an early period, to determine the nature of this complaint.

By the use of proper remedies, soon after its first appearance, the disease may very often be prevented from making any farther progress. If neglected, the quantity of the discharge rapidly augments, and its colour becomes more deep, the pain in passing urine arises to an intolerable degree of acuteness, and the inclination to void it is more frequent than in health. When in bed, erection, accompanied with pain, and distortion of the penis, often occurs and is termed *Chordee*. When the disease has attained this degree of virulence, attempts to check its progress are frequently productive of bad consequences. The running itself having the effect of unloading the inflamed parts, should be permitted, for some time, to take its course.

At the commencement of this complaint, it is in the patient's power to do much for his own relief. Careful washing will prevent infection; strict cleanliness, temperance, rest, and the use of diluent drinks, will often alone perform a cure. On the contrary, indulgence in high seasoned food, stimulating liquors, and exercise, besides aggravating all the symptoms already detailed, frequently produce difficulty, or total suppression of urine, inflammation of the bladder, and abscess in the seat, diseases highly dangerous, and difficult to subdue.

In its early stages gonorrhœa is to be considered as a complaint merely local, generally admitting of a cure by local remedies. Whether it ever gives rise to the

constitutional form of the disease, is a point which seems not yet perfectly determined. After a running had continued for a considerable time, I have seen chancres take place, when there was no suspicion of any fresh infection; but, whether these were the effect of the matter discharged from the urethra lodging upon the part, or whether both the complaints were communicated at one time, and appeared at different intervals, I do not pretend to decide. The doubt, however, strongly inculcates the propriety of scrupulous attention to cleanliness during the whole course of the disease.

By local remedies are understood principally injections of some fluid, applied by means of a syringe to the internal part of the urethra. Many prejudices have existed against this class of remedies. Some founded on their supposed tendency to drive the disease into the blood. The absurdity of this notion is sufficiently exposed by knowing that gonorrhœa is a disease entirely confined to the interior surface of the urethra. It has also been imagined, that checking the running by injections is apt to produce swelled testicle, or other painful and disagreeable symptoms. The inflammation attending gonorrhœa has a peculiar tendency to translate, or shift from one part of the body to another. It is by no means uncommon to see a copious running suddenly stop, and painful swelling of one or both testicles, immediately succeed; at other times the inflammation seems suddenly transferred to the neck, or the inside of the bladder, or even to the

kidneys. It is well known, that in consequence of imprudent exposure to cold, a running has ceased, and been immediately followed by violent inflammation of the eyes, which has terminated in the total loss of these organs. As these translations of the seat of the disease seldom happen till after it has continued some time, they cannot, with propriety, be attributed to the use of injections, which are generally used at the commencement of the complaint, and tend to prevent its reaching a stage when these symptoms are most to be dreaded. The most painful and tedious swelling of both testicles in alternate succession, I ever saw, took place where the running had been left to itself for some weeks, the person having applied for no assistance till alarmed by this symptom. Experience, indeed, has convinced me that the best and safest practice is to attempt the cure of this complaint by injections, provided they are used at a sufficiently early period of the disease.

Injections do not, according to the common opinion, cure this disease, in consequence of any astringent or restrictive faculty, which they may be supposed to possess; but rather as being stimuli of a peculiar kind. It is an axiom of the animal œconomy, that two modes of action cannot go on in a part at the same time; if, then, by means of injecting some irritating fluid into the urethra, an action can be produced, and kept up, different from that arising from the stimulus of the venereal contagion, the diseased action may be overcome, and the complaint removed. It is

on this principle that, I believe, injections cure gonorrhœa, and keeping this principle in view, will explain most of the circumstances necessary to be attended to in using them.

It shews the propriety of having recourse to them at an early period, with the intention of stifling the diseased action before it is confirmed, as well as the necessity of their frequent and assiduous repetition. When these points have been carefully attended to, I have known many instances of the complaint being so speedily removed, that the patient could hardly be persuaded infection had ever taken place.

An easy cure is often missed by a negligent, or unskilful mode of injecting. The following directions for applying them ought to be carefully practiced. The *conical* extremity of a syringe containing the injection, should be cautiously introduced into the urethra, till it fills up the passage, and retained there, by gently compressing the glans upon it with the thumb and fore-finger; when this is done, the piston of the syringe is to be gradually pressed down by the fore-finger of the other hand, till the urethra feels gently distended. The syringe is now to be withdrawn, and if the thumb and finger are not removed, they will compress the urethra, and retain the injected fluid, which should be continued for about half a minute, when it may be allowed to escape. This process should be repeated thrice in immediate succession, and the injection used five or six times in the course of the day.

The best rule to regulate the frequency of repetition, is, that the smarting produced by the injection should never be permitted entirely to subside. This pain, by paying attention to his feelings, the patient will be enabled to distinguish from that occasioned by the disease, and when he perceives it to abate, recourse should be immediately had to a repetition of the remedy. The subsequent pain should be moderate : more advantage is derived from repeating injection frequently, than from using it so strong as to give much uneasiness. The urine ought to be evacuated immediately before injecting, and any inclination to make water soon afterwards should be suppressed. During the whole of the complaint, indeed, the pain in making water will be diminished, if the bladder is allowed to fill before it is evacuated. The use of the injection should be continued, gradually diminishing its strength, for some time after the complaint has totally ceased.—However minute and frivolous these instructions may appear, I am convinced the patient will find advantage in strictly attending to them.

It has already been observed, that it is only during the first stage of the complaint, that immediate and certain good effects can be expected from the use of injections. During its farther progress, a variety of distressing circumstances occasionally take place. The best precautions against them are rest, temperance, the use of diluting liquors, and keeping the body open, not, however, by saline purgatives ; walking is less prejudicial than riding. During the inflammatory

stage of gonorrhœa, bloody urine, is often the consequence of travelling a short way in a coach.

No symptom is more distressing than the *ARDOR URINÆ*, or sensation of heat, and pain, during the passage of the urine. It is produced by the salts contained in that secretion, irritating the internal membrane of the urethra, deprived of its natural mucous covering, and rendered more susceptible of impressions by being inflamed. Much of the saline impregnation of the urine consists of common salt, and it is rendered considerably milder by abstaining from that article of diet. Plentiful dilution with simple water, tea, solution of gum arabic, cappillaire and water, or almond emulsion are of use; but infusion of linseed * gives the most decided relief. This mucilage seems to reach the bladder without being decomposed; and drinking plentifully of it, seldom fails to assuage pain, and irritation in making water. The passage of urine is occasionally prevented by spasmodic stricture about the neck of the bladder, which may often be relieved by immersing the penis in warm milk and water.

PAINFUL ERECTIONS are prevented by lying cool, avoiding stimulating food, and bathing the private parts in tepid water. No attempt should be made to prevent them, by fastening the penis down, as it may be productive of very bad consequences. Occasionally, during the violence of the orgasm, a few drops of blood are discharged; at which there is no occasion to be alarmed, as it is generally followed by

* See Appendix.

considerable relief. This effort of nature points out the propriety of bleeding with leeches along the course of the urethra when this symptom is particularly troublesome. A proper dose of opium, combined with some antispasmodic, taken at bed-time, seldom fails to alluage its violence. It is often produced by the irritation of cloths hardened by the discharge. This should be guarded against by cleanliness; whatever is employed to absorb the matter should be soft, as tow, or lint, and frequently renewed.

SWELLED TESTICLE is another painful symptom frequently attending this disease, and is usually accompanied with a cessation of the discharge. It is not necessary in this case to inculcate the propriety of rest, as the pain is generally so acute as to prevent the possibility of using exercise. On the first sensation of pain in the testicle, the common suspensary truss should be immediately put on; or some adequate contrivance made use of to support the parts. Certain constitutions are peculiarly liable to this complaint. I am acquainted with some individuals in whom it is the certain consequence of gonorrhœa, and others in whom it never occurs. It is best obviated by the use of the bag truss, which I, therefore, generally recommend to be worn from the commencement of the complaint. This contrivance is also very useful in retaining any dressings that may be necessary to apply to the part. Low diet, blood taken from the system, as well as from the part, by the repeated application of leeches, purgatives, and other

remedies, not necessary to detail here, are often required to remove this painful disease. Notwithstanding every attention, it will frequently continue for a considerable length of time. Even after it is cured a degree of hardness will remain in some part of the testicle for months, which in time, however, will gradually melt away.

It is difficult to lay down general rules for the regulation of diet during the continuance of gonorrhœa, as different constitutions require very different modes of treatment. In the weak, and irritable, inflammation is most apt to spread, and most difficult to manage. In such habits the disease quickly extends along the whole course of the urethra, and affects the neck, or even the internal surface of the bladder, occasioning the discharge of bloody urine; and often accompanied with so much pain in the back, as to render an upright posture extremely uneasy. Abstinence and evacuations frequently aggravate all these symptoms, while they are most effectually prevented by a moderate use of solid food and wine, and cured by the judicious employment of peruvian bark, opium, and tonics.

In the strong and robust, inflammation is subdued with less difficulty. General evacuations, by bleeding and purging, joined with abstinence and rest, are of immediate service. Experience alone can determine the various shades of constitution requiring particular modifications of these different kinds of treatment.

Of the more remote consequences of gonorrhœa, one of the most troublesome and difficult to remove is

GLEET. This is a discharge of glairy matter from the urethra, generally unaccompanied with pain, and leaving a slight stain on the linen. By some, the criterion of this complaint is considered to be the cessation of the running to be infectious. This, however, is fallacious, although the patient is often very anxious to have the point determined. As long as a running continues it is always to be suspected of being contagious, and nothing should be neglected to remove it. Sometimes it is the consequence of the parts having acquired a habit of secreting more than they do in health, when astringent injections are found to be of use; at others, the running seems to proceed from a particular spot in the urethra, where a slight pain is felt when the urine passes over it, and which may also be distinguished by pressing with the finger, externally, along the course of that canal. This disease has much analogy to an old sore on the surface of the body. Local pressure seems the best remedy for both; which, to the inside of the urethra, is applied by means of a bougie occasionally smeared with some suitable material. I have known many instances of this kind of gleet being removed by sea bathing.

STRICTURE in the urethra is frequently the effect of gonorrhœa. It is caused by a thickening of the membranes forming that canal, at some particular part, by which the area of the passage is diminished. It generally causes an alteration in the discharge of urine; the stream is diminished in size, or scatters,

or is forked, or twisted, when it issues from the penis. A slight pricking pain is of often felt, and a thickening, or knot is perceived on applying the finger externally. It is not uncommon to find four or five of these in the course of the urethra. A stricture is often accompanied with a gleet, which in that case is generally not infectious.

The removal of a stricture depends entirely on the use of the bougie*; and, as its success depends on constant and sedulous application, the patient should learn to introduce it himself. After choosing one of such a size, as previous trials have taught, will pass the narrower part of the canal, it is to be smeared with oil, and carried gently along the passage with one hand, while the penis is drawn up on it by the other, till it reaches the seat of the disease. A gentle and steady pressure is to be continued till it passes the stricture; in that situation, it must be retained as long as the feelings of the patient will permit. In introducing the bougie, pressure should be made rather against the under surface of the urethra. Small apertures, termed lacunæ, are situated on the upper part, into which the extremity of the instrument is apt to hitch, frequently giving rise to mistakes with respect to the existence of obstructions.

A bougie may be used whenever a person has an

* A bougie is a slender tapering cylinder, made of plaster, spread on linen, and rolled up, or preferably of cat-gut, or elastic gum, of various sizes, capable of being introduced into the urethra.

opportunity of remaining for some time in the same posture. Some I have known walk about with them; a practice by no means to be recommended. A very proper time to apply a bougie, is an hour or two before the usual time of rising in the morning; after introducing it, the patient may go to sleep again. In that case, however, it is necessary to use proper precautions by fastening it to the penis with a ligature, to prevent the instrument from working out, or from slipping into the bladder, an accident that has happened, the bad consequences of which may easily be conceived. The size of the bougies is to be increased in proportion to the progress that is made in removing the stricture. And the use of them should be continued for some time after it is quite gone, in order to prevent the danger of a return of the disease.

During the existence of a stricture in the urethra, intemperance is dangerous. Hard drinking will sometimes occasion a total obstruction of urine. Those who have experienced an attack of this kind should never be without bougies of various sizes about them. No means should be neglected to get rid of a stricture at an early period; continuance renders it worse; even after being apparently cured, it will often recur on the approach of old age, laying the foundation of diseases of the prostate gland, and suppression of urine, thus accelerating, if not immediately, causing death.

Fortunately for those afflicted, even with the worst cases of this complaint, a radical cure may often be

obtained from the application of caustic, in a peculiar manner, not necessary to be explained. For this important discovery the world is much indebted to Mr. John Hunter; as well as to Mr. Home, for simplifying, improving, and extending the utility of the practice.

The cure of gonorrhœa in the female sex is to be conducted on the same principles that are applicable to the male. Women, upon the whole, suffer much less from the disease. From many circumstances, which are sufficiently obvious, it is neither so easy to know when it exists in them, nor when it is cured, as in men; so that it may be, and often is communicated, without the party herself being conscious that she is infected.

In detailing the treatment of gonorrhœa, I have not mentioned mercury, because I do not believe that, in what is properly termed this complaint, it is ever necessary. It may occasionally be given as a purgative, but as such possesses no peculiar merit.—Those who labour under this disease ought to be aware, that medicine is in possession of nothing, which with respect to it, can be termed a specific. And that the delicate and complicated structure of the parts, which are the seat of the disorder in the male sex, often render its treatment a matter of difficulty to the most experienced practitioner, as well as tend to protract its duration for a considerable length of time.

O F

IMAGINARY VENEREAL COMPLAINTS.

MANY people, if they have once had the misfortune to contract the venereal disease, take it into their heads that they are never cured. Every pimple, ache, or discoloration of the skin that occurs at any after period, however distant, they apprehend to be some relict of the disorder. Thus rendering their own existence wretched, and teasing those whom they consult, by vague and unmeaning queries, to which it is impossible to give satisfactory answers. The truth, I believe to be, that the venereal disease never does lurk long in the constitution, without giving rise to some decided, and unequivocal symptoms; and the only wise and prudent conduct, a man who has any suspicions about his situation can pursue, is to do nothing till such appearances take place as put the matter beyond a doubt. The interval necessary to clear up this question will not make any important difference in the time necessary to effect a cure; and it is much better to wait a little, than to incur the certain evil attending a course of mercury, with a view to remove a disease that perhaps does not exist,

Rawness, foreness, and small ulcerations along the edges of the tongue, not unfrequently occur, which are apt to be mistaken for venereal symptoms; they are often the consequence of a mercurial course protracted by the patient's irregularities. These appearances are generally exasperated by mercurials; and, as well as that enlargement of the tongue, which sometimes will continue long after a severe salivation, are alleviated, and generally cured by the repeated application of leeches to the part affected.

I have seen several instances of a disease brought from India, that has many features in common with the venereal; such as painful swellings of the bones, enlargement of the joints, cutaneous eruptions, and even total absorption of some of the smaller bones of the extremities. In this complaint, I have known a mercurial course carried to the utmost extent the constitution could bear, without producing any benefit, but rather indeed the contrary. From persisting, during a length of time, in the use of a decoction of guajacum, or of mezereon, some advantage has been derived; but as far as I know, neither the nature, nor the cure of the disease in question, is yet understood.

It is not uncommon to meet with persons who conceive they labour under the venereal disease, and will detail a variety of symptoms, with an accuracy sufficient to impose on an unguarded mind, without, in fact, ever having contracted it at all. This is a mental hallucination, or erroneous judgment, the cure of which must be attempted by sometimes humouring the

patient's fancy, as in other partial insanities. If it be found impossible to convince him, that he is not affected with the complaint, it often becomes necessary, with a view to remove the mental impression, to enter upon a course of mercury; during the continuance of which, the patient is to be encouraged with the hopes of a cure, which is to be declared complete on the appearance of a slight salivation.

OF IMPOTENCE.

NEXT to those wants which are immediately connected with the preservation of the individual, the most powerful appetite nature has implanted in animals, is that which is subservient to the propagation of the species. On the ability to perform this mysterious and important function with due propriety, men in general pride themselves much. Any consciousness, or even suspicion of deficiency, on the contrary, affects the mind in a very peculiar manner. And again, the influence of the mind, in consequence of too much attention to the subject, connecting itself with an operation that is purely involuntary, and ought to be the effect of external excitement alone, tends much to aggravate the disease. If the patient imagines, that any acts of imprudence on his own part, have been instrumental in laying the foundation of his malady, he is apt to be strongly affected by remorse, that oftener terminates in suicide than is, perhaps, generally suspected*. Nature thus avenging the violation of her primary law, by rendering that existence

* Dr. Darwin relates several cases of men, who became suicides at an early period of life, and assigned impotence as the cause of their despair.—*Zoonomia*, vol. 2d.

irksome to the individual, which he has rendered himself incapable of transmitting to another.

Impotence is sometimes the consequence of particular symptoms of the venereal disease. A swelled testicle may terminate in schirrus, and prevent the secretion of semen. Instances are also recorded of these glands after having been enlarged, gradually wasting away till no vestige of them remained. There is also a well authenticated case, where, in consequence of suppuration having taken place in both testicles, the semen in coitu, instead of passing along the urethra, was discharged by apertures in the scrotum. Here, indeed, neither inclination nor power was deficient, but the purpose was totally frustrated. Such cases are, indeed, to be lamented, they cannot be cured. I am acquainted, however, with an instance, where, in consequence of a great deal of disease, more than an inch of the extremity of the urethra was entirely obliterated. After recovery, no defect of desire, or of ability was experienced; the person having since begot children.

Temporary impotence is sometimes produced by a long protracted gleet, which in general disappears with the disease. Often, it is the consequence of intemperate indulgence in the use of spirituous liquors, at an early period of life. In such cases, sea-bathing has the most salutary effects.

When this disease is the consequence of other causes, which have already been hinted at, infinite mischief is done by those diabolical publications, which, to the shame of decency, are daily obtruded on the

attention of youth, through the medium of the public papers. To enhance the merit of their nostrums, and extort money from their unhappy victims, their authors never fail to aggravate the horror, and despondence, which are leading features of this complaint. The only remedy, and one that seldom fails, is a prudent return to the paths of nature, which have, I believe often ignorantly, been swerved from.

OF PREVENTION*.

EVER since the first appearance of the venereal disease in Europe, men, desirous to pluck the rose of pleasure, without fear of being wounded by its thorns, have made various efforts to counteract the infectious nature of this complaint. These have all successively sunk into oblivion, and their temporary reputation seems to have depended more on their concealment, than their efficacy. This purpose has been attempted to be effected principally in two ways. By some previous applications that may prevent the contact of the infectious matter, or somewhat which may combine with, and neutralize, or wash off the poison, after it has been applied.

To the former may be referred various greasy applications, and means still more mechanical, the inde-

* In the year 1779, Mr. De Horne published, by order of the French government, a work, in which he appreciates the relative merit of all the various modes of curing, or preventing the venereal disease then known. Of the part concerning prophylactics, in which he investigates, by chemical analysis, the composition, and considers the effects of the various articles offered to the public for that purpose, this chapter is a short, but not inaccurate abstract.

licacy of which must always oppose their general employment.

The latter comprehends all the variety of washes which, under various denominations, and accompanied with strong assertions of their absolute infallibility, are daily offered to the public attention. By a variety of experiments it has been proved, that the infectious properties of venereal matter, are not to be destroyed, by combination with any thing, that can with safety, be applied to the human body. A knowledge of this fact, at once does away all dependence on mercurial applications.

The venereal poison is always conveyed, mingled with animal mucus. Caustic alkali converts this mucus into soap, in which state it may easily be washed from any part to which it adheres, by affusion of water. And this alkali, or soap lees, variously disguised, forms the base of the most efficacious washes, or preventives, as they are termed, offered to the public. The use of them is not, however, unattended with danger, if not diluted with the due proportion of water: and if too weak, they are inefficacious. A nicety to which, those who have occasion to apply them, are not always in a condition to attend. Every such purpose is answered as effectually, and with much more safety by the careful use of a solution of common, or, preferably, of soft soap, which combines equally well with the mucous matter, and is washed off with more facility.

It is only in peculiar cases, however, that success can be expected from any thing of this kind. Where infection is received by some little fissure in the cuticle, as already explained, which, I believe, in a plurality of instances to be the fact, nothing can be relied on but the caustic. But from the mischief that I have seen produced, by the improper use of this agent, I do not think it prudent in any man, to trust the application of it to his own hands.

END.

APPENDIX.

POULTICE.

SOAK a sufficient quantity of the soft part of bread in boiling water for a few minutes, and gently press off the superfluous fluid. Then beat it to a pulp, and add as much linseed meal as will render the whole somewhat tenacious. It may be spread about the thickness of a quarter of an inch on linen cloth, and applied warm twice a day.—If made with cold water, with the addition of a little vinegar of lead, it forms a good repellant application.

DECOCTION OF SARSAPARILLA.

DIVIDE a pound of sarsaparilla into six equal parts. To one of these add two quarts of warm water. After standing some hours, take the sarsaparilla out, bruize it, and after returning it to the same water, boil the whole gently, till only one-half remains. It may be sweetened by adding a little sliced liquorice root about ten minutes before the decoction is finished, or by the addition of brown sugar at the time of using it. It should always be used within two days after it is prepared, as it is apt to be spoiled by fermentation.

INFUSION OF LINSEED.

TO a table spoonful of linseed, add a quart of boiling water, and let it remain sometime by the fire in a covered vessel. It may be sweetened by the addition of liquorice root, or of sugar.

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